

Anthrax Threat

What You Should Know

What is anthrax?

Anthrax is a disease caused by a bacterium (*Bacillus anthracis*) that can be spread in its dormant (spore) form. It is harmful only if a sufficient dose is inhaled, ingested, or introduced into an open cut or wound. **Anthrax cannot be spread by coughing or sneezing.**

People who are exposed to anthrax spores should be evaluated for treatment by a physician. **There are effective treatments available to prevent the disease.**



ATTENTION

**In the event of
a terrorism threat,
call 911 immediately.**

If you receive a package or letter you suspect contains anthrax:

- **Set the package down gently and leave it undisturbed** to avoid release of spores into the air.
- **Immediately wash your hands** thoroughly with soap and warm water.
- **Call 911 to report the incident.** Follow the instructions of the 911 Operator until help arrives.
- Remember: **Do not handle the package** further unless absolutely necessary.
- The package may be taken to a laboratory for analysis. In the event that the material is determined to contain anthrax spores, **exposed persons should be evaluated for treatment by a physician.**

For more information, contact your local health department or law enforcement agency.

In the event of a terrorism threat or emergency, call 911 immediately.



Mary Selecky, Secretary of Health
Maxine Hayes, MD, State Health Officer

*These guidelines are provided to you by the
Washington State Department of Health, and
are endorsed by the Washington Emergency
Management Council and its
Committee on Terrorism.*

www.doh.wa.gov/Alerts/Anthrax.htm